

Message Text

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PAGE 01 TEHRAN 00083 061320Z

53

ACTION NEA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01 INR-07 L-02

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 SAM-01 SAB-01 IO-10 ACDA-05 AID-05 /076 W

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R 061230Z JAN 75

FM AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

TO AMEMBASSY CAIRO

INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 9651

AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY MANAMA

AMEMBASSY MUSCAT

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

C O N F I D E N T I A L TEHRAN 0083

BEIRUT PASS USINT BAGHDAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, IG, IZ, IR

SUBJ: SHAH'S VISIT TO EGYPT JAN 8-12: BACKGROUND AND PROGNOSIS

SUMMARY: VISIT MARKS MAJOR IMPROVEMENT IN IRAN'S RELATIONS WITH EGYPT. SADAT'S ROLE AS MODERATE AND REASONABLE ARAB LEADER HAS BEEN APPRECIATED IN IRAN. DESPITE DEEP MISTRUST OF IRAQI MOTIVES, AND SKEPTICISM ANY IMPROVEMENT WILL RESULT, SHAH WOULD BE PLEASED IF SADAT'S RAPPORT WITH SADDAM HUSSEIN COULD EXERT MODIFYING INFLUENCE ON LATTER. ALTHOUGH IRAN IS STILL BASICALLY NEUTRAL BETWEEN ARABS AND ISRAELIS, NET EFFECT OF SHAH'S RECENT INTERVIEWS WITH ARAB PAPERS HAS BEEN TO GIVE MORAL SUPPORT TO ARAB CAUSE. NUMEROUS VISITS BETWEEN CAIRO AND TEHRAN HAVE SET STAGE FOR GREATER ECONOMIC COOPERATION AND USEFUL EXCHANGE OF VIEWS ON POLITICAL AND

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PAGE 02 TEHRAN 00083 061320Z

SECURITY SUBJECTS WHEN SHAH SEES SADAT, BUT WE DO NOT EXPECT

MOMENTOUS DECISIONS TO RESULT. MAIN BENEFIT FROM SHAH'S STANDPOINT WILL BE TO LEND HIS SUPPORT TO OTHER EFFORTS UNDERWAY TO SOLVE ARAB-ISRAELI CONFLICT, A CONTRIBUTION WHICH COULD BE HELPFUL IN VIEW OF HIS ENTREE' INTO BOTH CAMPS. END SUMMARY.

1. BACKGROUND: PLANNED JANUARY 8-12 VISIT TO EGYPT OF SHAH AND EMPRESS FARAH WILL BE ONLY HIS SECOND TRIP THERE. FIRST WAS AS CROWN PRINCE IN 1938 IN CONNECTION WITH HIS MARRIAGE TO PRINCESS FAWZIA, KING FAROUK'S SISTER. IT MARKS MAJOR IMPROVEMENT IN RELATIONS BETWEEN TWO COUNTRIES, SO OFTEN AT LOGGERHEADS DURING NASSER YEARS WHEN UAR WAS VOICE OF RADICAL ARAB POLICIES IN PERSIAN GULF AREA. RELATIONS BROKEN IN SEPTEMBER 1960 WERE NOT RESTORED UNTIL AUGUST 1970 AFTER EGYPTIAN MEMORIES OF IRAN'S OIL DELIVERIES TO ISRAEL DURING 1967 WAR HAD FADED AND SHAH AHD REPEATEDLY SUPPORTED UN RESOLUTION CALLING FOR ISRAELI WITHDRAWAL FROM OCCUPIED ARAB TERRITORY. RELATIONS WERE ALREADY IMPROVING WHEN NASSER DIED, AND SHAH SENT PREMIER HOVEYDA TO ATTEND FUNERAL. PRESIDENT SADAT STOPPED BRIEFLY IN TEHRAN ENROUTE TO MOSCOW IN OCTOBER 1971, AND SHAH COULD BE SAID TO BE RETURNING THE HONOR NOW. ROYAL COUPLE WILL BE ACCOMPANIED BY FONMIN KHALATBARY, ARYAMEHR TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY CHANCELLOR HOSSEIN NASR, AN 14 OTHER COURT, MILITARY AND MFA OFFICIALS.

2. ARAB WORLD: EGYPT APPEARS ANXIOUS TO CONTINUE EFFORTS TO MEND ITS RELATIONS BOTH WITH RIVAL ARAB GOVERNMENTS AND WITH NON-ARAB IRAN. EGYPT HAS TRIED TO PATCH UP DISPUTES BETWEEN IRAN AND ARAB COUNTRIES OVER USE OF TERM "ARAB" RATHER THAN "PERSIAN" GULF IN JOINT COMMUNIQUE. IRANIAN COMMENTARY ON ARAB SUMMIT OF OCTOBER 1974 PRAISED SADAT FOR HIS CENTRAL ROLE AS MEDIATOR BETWEEN RIVAL GROUPS AND AS COORDINATOR OF REASONABLE POSITIONS ON INTERNATIONAL ISSUES. TEHRAN WAS PLEASED AT SUMMIT'S REFUSAL TO ACCEPT IRAQI PROPOSAL THAT IRAN-IRAQ RELATIONS BE DISCUSSED, AND WELCOMED ITS REQUEST THAT KING HUSSEIN TRY MEDIATING BETWEEN IRAN AND IRAQ. ALTHOUGH SKEPTICAL THAT ANYTHING CAN BE DONE TO MODERATE IRAQ'S PROVOCATIVE ATTITUDE, THE SHAH WOULD BE PLEASED IF IMPROVED RELATIONS BETWEEN SADAT AND SADDAM HUSSEIN RESULTED IN EGYPTIAN INFLUENCE ON IRAQ TO NEGOTIATE ITS DIFFERENCES WITH IRAN. NEWS SOTRY THAT SADAT WILL VISIT BAGHDAD IN APRIL SUGGESTS EGYPT MAY TRY TO PLAY SUCH A ROLE.

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PAGE 03 TEHRAN 00083 061320Z

3. ARAB-ISRAELI RELATIONS: GWERTZMAN OF NY TIMES AND SCHMIDT OF CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR ARE LATEST OBSERVERS TO COMMENT ON POSSIBLE IRANIAN ECONOMIC AND MILITARY ASSISTANCE TO EGYPT. CAIRO VISITS OF CHIEF OF STAFF AZHARI AND INTELLIGENCE CHIEF NASSIRI HAVE LED TO SPECULATION IRAN MIGHT TRANSFER ARMS TO EGYPT, BUT FONMIN KHALATBARY HAS DENIED TO EMBASSY THAT AZHARI'S TRIP RELATED TO ARMS DEALS (TEHRAN 10870). AS FOR ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE, 1974 EXCHANGE OF VISITS BY MIN ECON AND FINANCE ANSARY AND DEPPRIMIN

HEGAZY RESULTED IN PUBLIC COMMITMENTS OF \$250 MILLION CREDIT FOR RECONSTRUCTION PORT SAID, AND VARIOUS JOINT VENTURES AND INVESTMENTS AGREED TO OR UNDER CONSIDERATION MAY TOTAL \$850 MILLION (TEHRAN 4241 AND 10174). FURTHER IMPLEMENTING AGREEMENTS ARE LIKELY DURING SHAH'S VISIT. SCHMIDT HAS SUGGESTED THAT RATHER THAN TRANSFERRING ARMS, SHAH MIGHT LOAN OR GIVE EGYPT MONEY WITH WHICH TO BUY ARMS IN WEST. WE DOUBT VERY MUCH THAT SHAH WOULD MAKE MONEY AVAILABLE FOR THAT PURPOSE BECAUSE ARAB LEADERS HAVE LOANED EGYPT FUNDS, BUT OBVIOUSLY ANY INCREASE IN IRAN'S ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE TO EGYPT COULD FREE FUNDS FOR OTHER USES. IN RECENT INTERVIEWS THE SHAH HAS BEEN SOMEWHAT MORE PRO-ARAB THAN PREVIOUSLY, BUT HAS LIMITED HIMSELF TO MORAL SUPPORT.

4. PROGNOSIS: WE DO NOT LOOK FOR MOMENTOUS ACCOMPLISHMENTS DURING SHAH'S CAIRO VISIT. BOTH LEADERS WILL NEED TIME TO ESTABLISH RAPPORT, BUT APPEAR READY TO ACCENTUATE THE POSITIVE. PROVISION OF ARMS AID OR MILITARY TRAINING IS UNLIKELY TO APPEAR ON THE IRANIAN AGENDA. IF ISSUE ARISES, SHAH CAN BE EXPECTED TO DEFEND PRESENCE OF HIS TROOPS IN DHOFAR AS HE DID IN A RECENT INTERVIEW PUBLISHED IN KUWAIT AND SUBSEQUENTLY HIGHLIGHTED IN TEHRAN PRESS. MAIN BENEFIT FROM SHAH'S STANDPOINT WILL BE TO EMPHASIZE HIS STATESMANLIKE INTEREST IN HELPING TO SOLVE THE LARGER PROBLEMS OF THE MIDDLE EAST, PARTICULARLY IN LENDING HIS SUPPORT TO EFFORTS UNDERWAY TO SOLVE THE ARAB-ISRAELI DISPUTE, A CONTRIBUTION WHICH COULD BE HELPFUL IN VIEW HIS ENTREE' INTO BOTH ARAB AND ISRAELI CAMPS.
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